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Welcome!

Janet Bell, Chief Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Officer

Thank you all for the warm welcome as I transition into my role as the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer (CDEIO). Posting and filling this position was the first step in SCDMH's stated commitment to ensuring "equity and fairness in the manner in which the agency's services are delivered and the manner in which the agency's employees are valued."

"To support the recovery of people with mental illnesses" is why we are all here. As we work to fulfill this mission daily, treating each other with respect and valuing the individual goes a long way toward creating an experience that is inclusive for all — employees, patients, and patients' families.

In my role as CDEIO, I will assist management in identifying and eliminating instances of disparate treatment of both staff and patients and removing barriers that prevent staff from supporting our mission and barriers that prevent patients from recovering. The goal is to intentionally create an environment of compassionate belonging where everyone is valued and respected. As we move through the next several months, I will seek to openly engage you in dialogue about embracing our differences and similarities and the need for changes related to diversity and inclusion.

Commitment to diversity and inclusion must be enterprise wide. Through our joint efforts, SCDMH will position itself to strengthen its commitment to diversity and inclusion for years to come.

Why is focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion at SC DMH Important?

By Janet Bell, Chief Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Officer



Diversity, equity, and inclusion have always been important but they are now “must haves” in the workplace. Emphasis on ensuring that employees, patients, and residents feel valued for who they are and that they are being treated fairly and equitably are both critically important to a great employee and patient experience. Because there are no quick fixes when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion, focused attention and strategic effort are required to be successful.

The South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) has taken the first step in its efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating an Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (the Office). A few benefits the Office hopes to achieve

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are everyone's responsibility. Good can always be better.

are:

1. A greater awareness and respect for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the employee and patient experience
2. An increase in employee satisfaction and improved sense of belonging
3. Reduced employee turnover
4. A wider talent pool
5. Stronger, more consistent employee performance
6. An improved reputation in the community
7. An improved patient and resident experience

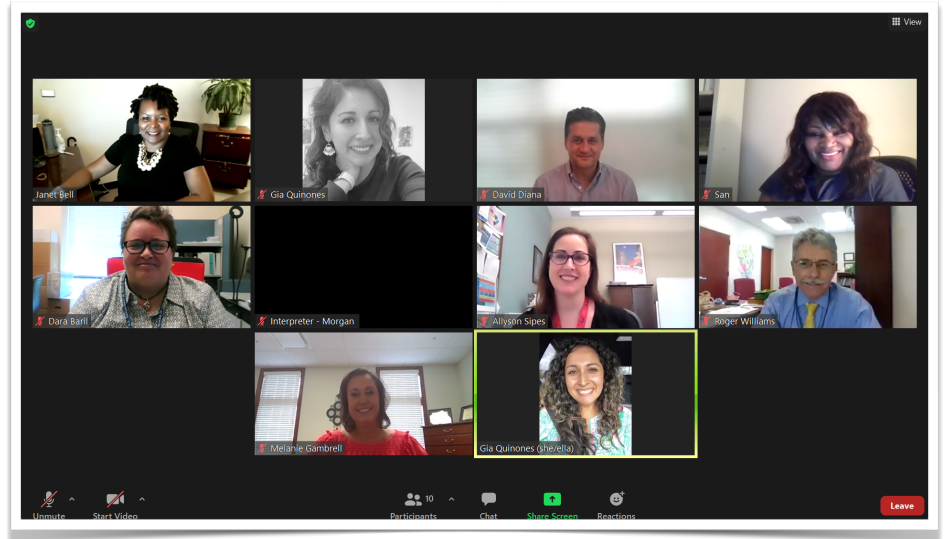
Diversity, equity, and inclusion are everyone's responsibility. Good can always be better. So, please join us as we work to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at SCDMH! Opportunities to help and participate will be coming your way!

Employee Perspectives

Hear from SCDMH Employees & Committee Members!

The Diversity and Inclusion team consists of a group of SCDMH employees from across the state working to bring about an ongoing discussion of diversity and inclusion throughout the department.

Interested in being a part of the committee? Do you have thoughts/ideas to share on diversity and inclusion? Contact our Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, Janet Bell at janet.bell@scdmh.org. We would love to hear your thoughts and share them in our newsletter!



Below are some committee members' comments on diversity and inclusion.

I am passionate about diversity and inclusion because...

Janet Bell: I am passionate about Diversity and Inclusion because....."It is the right thing to do. Diversity and inclusion are fundamental principles. It does not matter what your lived experience is, *respect* for our differences is what can make us stronger, wiser, and better as people".

San Cave-Riley: I am passionate about Diversity and Inclusion because... "I want individuals to feel valued for their experiences and perspectives. When this is true people are able to bring their authentic selves to the table and do their best work."

David Diana: Diversity and Inclusion gives us an opportunity to reflect and renew. It opens all of us up to new perspectives whereby we learn and come to understand more comprehensive ways of being, doing, and problem solving. We benefit from the uniqueness of every one of us!

Gia Quiñones: I am passionate about Diversity and Inclusion because.... "people deserve equitable access to opportunities."



Resources & Events

Resources

- ◆ **Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matter for Nonprofits:** This goes through not only the “how” of implementing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan, but also the “why”.
www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter-nonprofits
- ◆ **Racial Equity Tools Library:** Hungry for more resources than are offered here? This is a great database of information and tools to support individuals and organizations working to achieve racial equity. www.racialequitytools.org
- ◆ **Racial Equity Resource Guide:** In order to facilitate communication and avoid misunderstandings around sensitive issues, it’s important that everyone is using the same language. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has pulled together a glossary to help you and your team get on the same page.
www.racialequityresourceguide.org

Events

- ◆ **The Columbia International Festival:** The festival was held on June 5th and 6th at the South Carolina State Fairgrounds. The festival “showcases the music, culture, food, and performing arts of the various cultures, nationalities, races and language groups represented in South Carolina.”
<https://www.cifonline.org>